

MILITARY INTERVENTION IN INTRASTATE CONFLICTS IN WEST AFRICA:
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES
MONITORING GROUP AS A CASE STUDY

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General Studies

by

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the US Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

**MILITARY INTERVENTION IN INTRASTATE CONFLICTS IN WEST AFRICA:
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES MONITORING GROUP
AS A CASE STUDY**, by Major William Agyapong, 90 pages.

The end of the Cold War witnessed intensification of intrastate conflicts in the West African subregion. Prior to this era, the West African subregional body, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), had used traditional conflict resolution mechanisms to resolve conflicts. These notwithstanding, with the outbreak of conflict in Liberia in November 1989, ECOWAS employed ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), a military intervention force, in August 1990 as another conflict resolution mechanism. The end-state of ECOMOG was to stop the carnage, destruction of property, and create the conditions for diplomacy and dialogue to be employed hopefully resulting in a long-term political settlement. Since then, ECOMOG has been employed on four subsequent intervention operations in the countries of Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Côte d' Ivoire, and Liberia for a second time. This study analyses why ECOWAS continues to employ ECOMOG as a key element of the conflict resolution process, the possibility of ECOMOG becoming a standing force, the policy implications and examines ways of making the force more effective and relevant to the subregion. Some of the key conclusions of the research are that ECOMOG intervention operations will continue. Therefore, the ECOWAS Secretariat and ECOMOG Force needs to take determined action toward making the force more effective and relevant for the subregion.

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ACRONYMS

AAFC	Allied Armed Forces of the Community
ACOTA	African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program
ACRI	African Crisis Response Initiative
AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
ASF	African Stand-by Force
AU	African Union
BMATT	British Military Advisory Training Team
DOD	Department of Defense
ECOMICI	ECOWAS Mission in Côte d’ Ivoire
ECOMIL	ECOWAS Mission in Liberia
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group
GNA	Ghana News Agency
IGAD	Inter-Government Authority on Development
IISS	International Institute for strategic Studies
LURD	Liberia United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MAD	Mutual Assistance on Defence
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
MPCI	Patriotic Movement of Côte d’ Ivoire
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NPRC	National Provincial Ruling Council
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NTGL	National Transitional Government of Liberia
OAU	Organization for African Unity
PNA	Protocol on Nonaggression
RECAMP	Renforcement des Capacities Africaines de Maintien de la Paix (Strengthening of African Peacekeeping Capabilities)
ROEs	Rules of Engagements
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SMC	Standing Mediation Committee
SOPs	Standing Operating Procedures
UN	United Nations
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOCI	United Nations Operations in Côte d’Ivoire.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

The last twenty-five years have witnessed intensification of intrastate conflicts in West Africa. The subregion's leaders have tried to resolve these conflicts using various traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. These mechanisms have included commissions of mediation, ad-hoc committees, mediation by African Heads of State and the use of the Chieftaincy Institution. Recent conflicts in the region have, however, revealed that the use of these mechanisms alone has not helped much in resolving the conflicts and preventing the outbreak of violence. Since 1990, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has resorted to employing military intervention forces as a major part of its conflict resolution mechanisms. These interventions have created an atmosphere conducive for diplomatic means and the traditional conflict resolution means to be employed to resolve conflicts in the West Africa subregion.

The ECOWAS intervention force, known as the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), is a nonstanding force whose troops are contributed by West African militaries. ECOMOG has intervened in intrastate conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Côte d' Ivoire. Even though these interventions did little to eradicate the root cause of the conflicts in these countries, the interventions halted the carnage and created an atmosphere for peace to be restored and political dialogue to begin. In particular, the ECOMOG operation in Liberia has been widely acclaimed as one of the most successful and unprecedented in the history of peacekeeping (Dowyaro 2000, 7).

With the seemingly successful intervention operations by ECOMOG in the subregion, should ECOWAS continue to employ ECOMOG as a conflict resolution mechanism for intrastate conflicts in the subregion? Should ECOMOG become a standing force, and what will be the policy implications for leaders in the subregion? How can ECOMOG become more effective and relevant in the West African subregion?

The purpose of this research project is to examine why ECOWAS continues to employ the ECOMOG force as a conflict resolution mechanism during intrastate conflicts in West Africa. The research will also examine the possibility of the force becoming a standing force and the policy implications of having the force in the subregion. The major portion of this research project will also examine how ECOMOG can become more effective and relevant for the West Africa subregion as a whole.

Background

The demise of the Cold War saw an upsurge of conflicts throughout the world. However, there was a shift away from ideologically-based conflict, as witnessed in Namibia, Angola and Mozambique (Martin 1998, 1). In West Africa, ethnicity and religion flared up many of these intra-state conflicts. The democratic winds of change that emerged on the subregion in the early nineties pitted the then ruling dictators against numerous freedom groups arising from civil society. Many leaders in the subregion tried to impose national unity by consolidating political and economic power in the state resulting in bloated governments, inefficient bureaucracies and rampant corruption (Berman and Sam 2000, 16). There were numerous coups and countercoups in almost all the West African countries. All these accounted for an upsurge in civil strife and intrastate conflicts in the subregion. The countries in the West African subregion,

including Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, Gambia, Burkina Faso, Côte d' Ivoire, Niger and Mali, have all had their share of intra-state conflicts since end of the Cold War. These conflicts have been very costly in terms of lives and property and have inhibited economic growth, integration and development throughout the entire subregion.

Despite immense human rights abuses and the loss of lives and property during these intra-state conflicts in West Africa, the United Nations has not been very responsive in intervening. The international community's response to ECOMOG's foray into Liberia was one of wait and see (Ofuatey-Kodjoe 1994, 270). Again in Liberia, "although the United Nations contributed significantly to emergency relief, the UN did not address the Liberian crises in political terms until November 1992, almost three years after the crises erupted" (Human Rights Watch 1993, 21).

It was not until October 1992 that the UN retrospectively approved ECOMOG's actions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (Tuck 2004, 4). Interestingly, the United States of America (US), as the world's only remaining superpower, has also not been very proactive in intervening directly in West African subregion. Rather, the US has been willing to provide humanitarian assistance and military aid (equipment, training, strategic airlift, etc.) to the subregion for its peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. For instance, in 1993, in addition to humanitarian assistance, the US provided \$8.6 million to ECOWAS for peacekeeping and \$18.75 million in Foreign Military Financing and Department of Defense (DOD) drawdown funds for ECOWAS peacekeeping activities.

Apart from the UN and US, the Organization for African Unity (OAU), now African Union (AU), has not been able to initiate such interventions during crises in the

subregion. In addition to a lack of willpower, as a third world regional body, the AU has insufficient financial means to invest in these operations. Indeed, during the Liberian conflict in 1990, the OAU did not play a significant role. It did not immediately show concern towards the conflict as it lacked the financial capacity and will power to do so (Scheepers 1999, 15).

Economic Community of West African States

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), founded in 1975, is a subregional group of fifteen countries. Eight of the countries are French speaking whilst the five of the remaining are English speaking and two speak Portuguese. The organization's mission is to promote economic integration in all fields of economic activity, particularly industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions, and social and cultural matters.

The organization is comprised of Burkina Faso, Benin, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. The organization also includes the following institutions: the Authority of Heads of States and Government, Council of Ministers, Community of Parliament, Economic and Social Council, Community Court of Justice, Executive Secretariat and the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development. It was quite clear from the onset that the security role was not an explicit task for this West African organization. However, the subregional leaders became aware of the serious lapse and then signed the "Protocol on Mutual Defense Assistance" in Freetown, Sierra Leone, on 29 May 1989.

The protocol provided for a nonstanding military force to be used to render mutual military aid and assistance to a member state that falls victim to external aggression (Khobe 2000, 2). The protocol obliges member countries to respond to any member's request during an internal conflict situation where the conflict has foreign involvement and is likely to affect security in the entire subregion. Despite the fact that this protocol was activated during the Liberian conflict, only few members (mainly from the Anglophone countries) heeded the call initially to form the force that came to be known as ECOMOG.

ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group

ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) as an intervention force was established in August 1990 as a result of the Liberia conflict. The conflict started with an invasion by rebels in December 1989 and quickly spread through the entire country. By August 1990, the main rebel movement, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) under the leadership of Charles McArthur Ghankay Taylor, was controlling about 90 percent of the country (Scheepers 1999,15). It was during this time that the Liberian President Samuel K. Doe, who came to power through a military coup in 1980, called on ECOWAS to assist him to restore normalcy to his country. This request initially divided ECOWAS between its Anglophone and Francophone factions (Berman and Sam 2000, 84-85). Whilst President Doe was a good friend to Nigerian President General Ibrahim Babangida, he was not on good terms with President Houphouet Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire. What compounded the issue further was that Charles Taylor, the leader of the main rebel group (NPFL) was Houphouet Boigny's son-in-law and obviously had the support of the Ivorian president. Subsequently, during early August 1990, as mayhem

loomed in Liberia, the Anglophone members of ECOWAS, under the auspices of ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee, met in Banjul, the capital of Gambia, and decided to send a military force to intervene in the conflict in Liberia (Berman and Sam 2000, 85).

The intervention force was designated ECOMOG with troops from Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone with Guinea being the only Francophone country (ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee, Decision A/DEC, August 1990). ECOMOG troops were commanded by General Arnold Quainoo, from Ghana, and entered Liberia on 24 August 1990. They encamped at the Freeport of Monrovia with the assistance of opposing factions of the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) and President Doe (Berman and Sam 2000, 93). ECOMOG's mandate was to impose a cease-fire to facilitate the creation of an interim government and set the conditions for elections to be held within twelve months (Human Rights Watch 1993, 6).

ECOMOG Operations in Liberia (August 1990-July 1997 and August-October 2003)

ECOMOG carried out two separate intervention operations in Liberia. The first occurred from August 1990 to October 1998. During this eight-year period, ECOMOG was opposed and attacked by the NPFL who saw ECOMOG as an occupation force. This happened because ECOWAS did not have the consent of the main rebel movement, the NPFL, before intervening in the conflict. On the eve of ECOMOG's arrival in Liberia, Taylor called the "peacekeeping force" a flagrant act of aggression (Berman and Sam 2000, 93). In the process, ECOMOG metamorphosed from a peacekeeping to a peace enforcement force in order to be able to enforce the peace in Liberia. Among the many

difficulties ECOMOG encountered was its inadequate logistical support as well as interoperability and command and control issues. Despite all the difficulties, ECOMOG halted the senseless carnage, maintained law and order, and restored peace. It assisted in humanitarian efforts, which reduced the suffering of the civilian populace.

ECOMOG's intervention created an atmosphere conducive for the ECOWAS secretariat to dialogue. This eventually led to peaceful free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections, on 19 July 1997, with Charles Taylor becoming the president. In addition to the countries that initially contributed troops for the force in Liberia, other countries that joined subsequently included Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. These countries joined later on as the corridor for diplomatic negotiations had been widened to include the Francophone countries in the subregion. Additionally, discussions had begun regarding the UN's involvement.

The second ECOMOG Intervention operation in Liberia occurred 5 years later in August 2003. Two rebel movements, the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) and the Liberia United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), invaded from the north and west and controlled a large part of the country. The rebel groups demanded the resignation of the president and a fresh election. As a result of the human sufferings in the country and the looming danger, the ECOWAS Heads of States, fearing a humanitarian disaster, coerced President Taylor to give in to the demand of the rebels and step down as president to allow an interim government to be formed for fresh elections within six months.

President Taylor yielded to enormous pressure by ECOWAS leaders and agreed to the rebel's demands on the condition that an ECOMOG force be formed to provide

security to the interim government until fresh elections were held. Consequently, ECOWAS employed ECOMOG, made up of mainly Nigerian Troops, to intervene with logistical support from the US. This force was known as ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL). The first Nigerian troops, made up of one battalion, redeployed from the Sierra Leone Mission, arrived on 4 August 2003 and fighting in the capital came to a halt. Subsequently, more troops from Nigeria and Ghana joined raising the number of ECOMIL troops to 3,500. As a result of the ECOWAS sponsored dialogue between President Taylor and the rebel movements, Charles Taylor stood down as president on 11 August 2003, handed over power to the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), and went into exile in Nigeria. ECOMOG forces now numbering about 3,500 troops, continued to maintain security in Monrovia and facilitated the signing of a Comprehensive Agreement in Accra on 18 August 2003 which brought in the UN (Mallam 2004, 3). The agreement requested the UN to deploy a force to support the NTGL to implement the agreement.

On 19 September 2003, the Security Council adopted resolution 1509 (2003), authorizing a UN mission to be known as United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). The force strength was earmarked at 15,000 soldiers and 1,115 civilian police officers and at its inception was the largest on-going UN peacekeeping mission in the world. Once more, the Security Council requested the Secretary General to transfer authority of the mission area from ECOMIL to UNMIL on 1 October 2003 and absolve the ECOMIL troops. Approximately 3,500 ECOMIL troops became UNMIL troops on 1 October 2003 all in the quest for peace in the West African subregion (Mallam 2004, 3).

ECOMOG Operations in Sierra Leone
(February 1998-October 1999)

The cause of the conflict in Sierra Leone could be traced to poor economic conditions, a government of exclusion, neglect, and widespread discontent among the people around the early 1990s. These were some of the reasons that made the rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) launch an attack on the country's capital of Freetown on 23 March 1991 with the aim of overthrowing the government. The Sierra Leone Army (SLA) tried at first to defend the government but, in 1992, a military junta under the leadership of twenty-seven year old Captain Valentine Strasser came to power after a coup. Captain Strasser's government was known as the National Provincial Ruling Council (NPRC). Despite the change of power, the RUF continued its attacks. In February 1995, the United Nations Secretary-General, in collaboration with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and ECOWAS, made several attempts to negotiate a settlement to the conflict and return the country to civilian rule. In January 1996, the deputy head of the NRPC Brigadier General Julius Maada Bio toppled the head of state Captain Strasser through a palace coup. He ultimately yielded to international and domestic pressure and held parliamentary and presidential elections in February 1996. The army subsequently relinquished power to the winner, Alhaji Dr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. The RUF, however, did not participate in the elections and therefore did not recognize the results (Adebajo 2002a, 84-85).

In November 1996, another peace agreement was negotiated between the Government and RUF known as the Abidjan Accord. This agreement was derailed by another military coup d'etat in May 1997 (Berman and Sam 2000, 114-115). This time the army joined forces with the RUF and formed a ruling junta--the Armed Forces

Revolutionary Council (AFRC). President Kabbah and his government went into exile in neighboring Guinea.

Presidents of ECOWAS promptly condemned the coup and implored the junta to hand over power to the legitimate government. The Foreign Ministers of ECOWAS, at an extraordinary meeting in Conakry, agreed to a three-pronged approach to the restoration of constitutional rule in Sierra Leone. These were dialogue, economic sanctions and military intervention, as the last resort. Consequently, a committee of four, comprised of the Foreign Ministers of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria was set up to mediate and resolve the crisis in Sierra Leone. Liberia was later added as the fifth member because of its strategic importance in the conflict area. This action marked a sharp difference from the ECOWAS approach to the Liberian War where there was no dialogue (consultation) before confrontation (intervention). This effort notwithstanding, the consultation did not yield positive results and ECOWAS imposed sanctions and an economic blockade (oil and arms) against the junta with complimentary efforts by the AU and UN (Adebajo 2002a, 88). These too did not yield the desired result and ECOMOG was mandated to defeat the AFRC/RUF junta in order to facilitate the reinstatement of Sierra Leone's democratically elected government.

The Nigerian-led ECOMOG intervention operations in Sierra Leone began with a nine-day offensive and bombardment of Freetown, the country's capital. ECOMOG succeeded in toppling the military junta and took control of Freetown on 13 February 1998. Despite the immediate dividend of ECOMOG reinstating the Kabbah government on 10 March 1998, the situation became worse for ECOMOG as acts of retribution, committed by President Kabbah, attracted more rebel activities (Eric and Sam 2000,

112). ECOMOG was therefore given a tougher mandate to flush out the rebels in order to maintain law and order. Consequently, they began to push the rebels outside Freetown and its environs.

The deployment of ECOMOG to the hinterland extended their line of communication making them vulnerable to the rebels. The AFRC/RUF capitalized on ECOMOG shortcomings and invaded Freetown on 6 January 1999. It took ECOMOG three weeks to dislodge them completely from Freetown. This invasion forced the Kabbah government to negotiate with the rebels. This culminated in the Lome Peace Accord, which was a power sharing arrangement between the rebels and the government. The ECOWAS initiative of military intervention was again acknowledged by the international community and the UN ultimately took over the ECOWAS peacekeeping efforts and replaced ECOMOG mission with United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in October 1999 (Adebajo 2002a, 100). Once more, ECOMOG activities created the conditions in which diplomatic and humanitarian activities could progress towards a long-term political settlement.

The legal authority upon which the Nigerian-led ECOMOG force derived its mandate to intervene in Sierra Leone remains unclear. President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah justified the intervention when he stated on BBC Radio that he was the one who invited ECOMOG because of a bilateral agreement between Nigeria and Sierra Leone. It was doubtful whether the bilateral defense agreement had explicitly authorized Nigerian troops to respond militarily to the coup. Nigeria also justified the intervention using the 1981 ECOWAS Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence (Eric and Sam 2000, 113-114). This, however, is doubtful since Article 2 of the Protocol (principle of collective

security) states that any threat or aggression against any member was to be considered as one against the entire community. Article 3 also requires member states to give mutual aid and assistance in a rebellious situation where the rebels have received external assistance. No one had proved in the Sierra Leone case that the AFRC junta received any assistance from outside. Therefore, ECOMOG intervention, prior to UN Security Council resolution, was generally believed to be unlawful (Eric and Sam 2000, 113-114).

ECOMOG Operations in Guinea Bissau (June 1998-April 1999)

In June 1998, ECOWAS again used ECOMOG to intervene in Guinea-Bissau. ECOMOG repulsed the rebellion by the former Chief of the Defense Staff of the country and restored to power the legitimate President, Joao Bernardo Vieira. This intervention operation was in response to a legitimate request by the president. The underlying cause of the conflict can be traced to allegations of the smuggling of illegal arms into the country in January 1998. This resulted in the suspension of the country's Chief of Defence Staff Mene from his post for dereliction of duty (Massey 2004, 79).

Opposition members in the country capitalized on the affair and blamed the government for its structural failure and demanded that the National Assembly of the country establish a committee to investigate the allegation of arms trafficking. Even though the committee's report was due by June 1998, the findings were not disclosed until 13 April 1999 (Massey 2004, 79). Some of the key findings of the report were far from endorsing the suspension of Mene but blamed high ranking officers in the security forces and implied that the President was aware of the trade deal but was unable, or unwilling, to intervene (Massey 2004, 79).

Before the committee would release the report, the former Chief of the Defence Staff Mene pre-empted it and publicly accused the President of agreeing to the arms smuggling. Subsequently, on 6 June 1999, the President appointed Brigadier General Humbert Gomes to replace the suspended Chief of Defence Staff. The following day, the dismissed Chief of Staff, and about 400 rebels, attacked and captured the Bra Military Barracks Complex and the country's airport in the capital city of Bissau (Massey 2004, 79). Mene proclaimed himself head of an interim military council, the Junta Militar, and called for fresh and transparent elections.

The immediate response was for the loyal troops to counter the attacks. The conflict assumed an international dimension when on 10 June 1998, three days after the fighting had begun, Senegal and Guinea dispatched 1,300 and 500 troops, respectively, to fight on the part of the government. These unilateral efforts of the two countries were short lived as they were matched by the determined rebels. The international community, under the auspices of the UN, EU, and AU, condemned the rebel activities and began a series of diplomatic moves to resolve the crisis. Eventually, the mantle fell on ECOWAS and a number of mediation committees undertook a series of talks to resolve the conflict. Finally, in November 1998, under the auspices of ECOWAS, the two main contenders, President Vieira and Mene signed the Abuja Agreement. The agreement required the formation of a government of national unity including members of the Junta, followed in March 1999 by legislative and presidential elections to be monitored by ECOWAS and the international community (Massey 2004, 92-93). It also required that Senegalese and Guinean troops who had been fighting alongside the government, were to be replaced by an ECOMOG force.

With this intervention operation, once more ECOWAS intervened in the internal affairs of a sovereign country in order to affirm its support for democracy in Guinea Bissau, in particular, and within the subregion in general. The ECOMOG force in Guinea-Bissau deployed at a time when there was a parallel ECOMOG operation in Sierra Leone which greatly affected its patronage. Despite funding and logistics assistance from France, deployment was slow and the size of the force not enough to fulfill its mandate (Massey 2004, 94). Despite all these handicaps, ECOMOG was able to secure a cease-fire and reinstate the president. The countries that contributed troops were Benin, Niger, and Togo.

ECOMOG Operations in Côte d' Ivoire (September 2002-February 2004)

The current conflict in Côte d' Ivoire began with the power struggle that ensued after the death of their long-time president, Houphouet-Boigny in 1993. At this time, the rate of immigration in the country had reached an alarming 40 percent of the population and had altered the country's religious demography. Twenty-seven percent of Ivorians are Muslim, yet when the immigrant population is added, Islam becomes the majority religion as many of these immigrants come from the surrounding Islamic nations of Burkina Fasso, Mali, Guinea, Senegal, Niger, Mauritania, and Nigeria. The power struggle that ensued saw Houphouet-Boigny's successor, President Konan Bedie, influencing the National Assembly to pass a controversial electoral code stipulating that presidential candidates must be Ivorian born of Ivorian parents. This amendment not only disenfranchised a large number of potential Muslim voters but also the most credible opposition candidate, Allassane Ouattara, (former Prime Minister under President

Houphouet-Boigny) whose parents were from Burkina Faso (Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies 2004, 2). In 1999, a referendum was held and 87.6 voters of the country approved the constitutional amendment. Ouattara was therefore banned from contesting the 2000 presidential elections.

The outcome of the referendum sparked massive civil unrest, accusations of discrimination and xenophobia and, in December 1999, General Robert Guei, a retired Army Commander, toppled the unpopular Bedi and took power in a bloodless coup (BBC News 2005, 1). In October 2000, Laurent Gbagbo, a Christian, was elected president after a popular uprising. By 19 September 2002, the government's loyal forces had repulsed two coups attempts and the former military leader, General Robert Guei, had been killed. The tension between the Christians from the south, backing the president, and the Muslims from the north supporting Ouattara, worsened as the government decided to retire a number of old soldiers who were mainly immigrants and Muslims. Even though the conflict was essentially political, it was splitting the country along ethnic and religious lines (BBC News 2005, 1).

The situation was even worsened by the fact that France also had some interest in Ouattara becoming president. When Ouattara was Prime Minister under Houphouet-Boigny, he permitted France to control services like water, telecommunications and electricity. France was aware of President Gbagbo's socialist tendencies and feared that he would not permit the monopoly to be renewed in 2004. Hence, France would have liked to see a cooperative Ouattara in power (Kendal 2002, 3). Côte d' Ivoire, historically one of West Africa's most stable countries, plummeted into civil war in September 2002 when mutinous soldiers attempted to overthrow President Gbagbo. Even though the coup

failed, it sparked a wide scale internal conflict. The largest of the three rebel groups, the Patriotic Movement of Côte d' Ivoire, led by Guillaume Soro, initiated the armed uprising from the country's northern boarder while the other two, the Far West Ivory Coast People Movement and the Movement for Justice and Peace, operated from the western region of the country shortly afterwards. In 2003, all the groups joined forces and became known as the "New Forces" (Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies 2004, 2).

Unlike the Liberian and Sierra Leone conflicts, ECOMOG military intervention activities began after a brokered cease-fire with the consent of all the stake holders. The cease-fire was brokered in October 2002 by ECOWAS mediators with the involvement and consent of the Ivorian Government of President Gbagbo and the main rebel group, the Patriotic Movement of Côte d' Ivoire (MPCI). The agreement authorized the ECOMOG monitoring mission to be known as ECOWAS Mission in Côte d' Ivoire (ECOMICI) (Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies 2004, 2).

In September 2002, the first batch of ECOMOG troops from Nigeria arrived to begin to implement the cease-fire agreement. ECOMOG operated with a force of 1,300 troops, in collaboration with a small UN Political and Military Liaison, and about 400 French Troops. As a result of this military deployment, the conflict situation remained relatively calm as the stakeholders complied with the cease-fire. This period of calm facilitated the speedy involvement of the UN. On 27 February 2004, the UN Security Council authorized a UN peacekeeping operation for Côte d' Ivoire with a force of approximately 7,000 UN personnel to help implement the peace agreement signed at Linas Marcoussis in France (Mallam 2004, 3). On 5 April 2004, fresh UN troops arrived

to join ECOMICI and became the UN Force known as United Nations Operations in Côte d' Ivoire (UNOCI).

The Success of ECOMOG

The notion that ECOMOG force has been relatively successful with its operations in the subregion is very debatable. Success, in this context, overlooks human rights issues that were leveled against the force. It does not also consider the time lapse between the initial entry and the exit of the force that spanned a period of over eight years (1990–1998) in the first Liberian operation. The success of ECOMOG has been seen in the light of the humanitarian catastrophe (lives and property) that it stopped at the hands of the warring factions. ECOMOG also helped to contain the conflict in the various theatres even though there were some spillover effects into some neighboring countries in the subregion. ECOMOG's intervention returned democratic rule to Liberia in 1997 when free and fair parliamentary and presidential elections saw Charles Taylor elected president.

Though the intervention in Sierra Leone did not resolve the crisis, the timely involvement of ECOMOG enabled the UN to smoothly take over the operations there. Despite the fact that the entire subregion is relatively unstable due to turmoil in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone, no one knows what the situation would have been like in the subregion without the numerous ECOMOG operations in the past. Indeed, ECOMOG's end state in all these intervention operations has not been to resolve the conflict but to stop the humanitarian sufferings and create the conditions for a long-term political settlement peace. Since these were achieved in all the operations, ECOMOG can

be said to have been successful. This probably explains why the subregional body, ECOWAS, continues to employ it as part of its conflict resolution mechanisms.

Assumptions

Assumptions underlying this research are four. The first is that there will continue to be conflicts in West Africa. These conflicts will be deeply rooted and will have the capacity to spill over rapidly from one country to any or all neighboring countries. The second assumption is that the US will continue to support West African militaries and may even increase the level of assistance by improving their peacekeeping and peace enforcement capacity. These will continue through training programs, like African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) and its follow-on replacement, the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program (ACOTA). The US also needs to continue to provide equipment and strategic transport lift for West African militaries during peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations in the subregion. The third assumption is that West African countries will continue to have the willpower to underwrite the financial sponsorship of ECOMOG intervention operations in order to avert massive loss of lives and property in the subregion. The last assumption is that countries, like Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal, will continue to be stable and take lead roles in ECOMOG Operations.

Definitions

Some of the terms and concepts used in the study are defined as follows.

African Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA): ACOTA is a U.S follow-on program to ACRI and was pioneered by President George W. Bush. It retains key components of ACRI. It also aims to build the peacekeeping capability of selected

African countries. ACOTA has more specific objectives for individual countries based on their needs. ACOTA is distinct from its predecessor program, ACRI, in terms of its intent to have more appropriately-tailored training packages. It also involves undertaking activities and programs that focus on countering the perishable nature of the training, and putting increased emphasis on peace enforcement training. ACOTA has been in existence from October 2002 to present.

Africa Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI): ACRI was a US government training package aimed at building on the capacity of selected African countries to respond quickly and effectively to peacekeeping and humanitarian relief contingencies on the continent --based on common doctrine and equipment enabling multinational units to work together more effectively (Evers, 2003,5). It completed its original 5-year mandate established by Congress in September 2002. It was pioneered by President Clinton, but the U.S Congress, under President Bush transformed it to ACOTA at the beginning of fiscal year 2003. ACRI's congressionally funded mandate lasted from 1996 until September 2002.

Americo-Liberians: These are the descendants from the freed blacks who immigrated in the 1800s to Liberia from America. They are the wealthy and elite in Liberia. About 1300 of them were settled between 1817 and 1867 by the American Colonization Society. They based their lifestyle and all aspects of their lives on that of their US slave plantation experience. Because of their elite status, they dominated the local indigenous Liberian tribal groups and the True Whig party, the most popular in Liberia, controlled the country from its foundation in 1847 until the coup of Samuel Doe in 1980.

Conflict: This is defined by the British Army Doctrine Publication as a situation in which violence is either manifested or threatened. It is a struggle or clash between contending wishes. It does not always induce violence but the risk of it is implied. The prevalent conflict situation in West Africa occurs between actors within the countries (intra-state). These intra-state conflicts are mainly value-based and deep rooted and hence are generally less amenable to conciliation. Because such conflicts are based on deep held values, peaceful instruments of dialogue will typically be quickly exhausted. Such situations, more or less, result in one or more of the parties switching to the use of force as the ultimate means to resolve the conflict on its own terms (Adu-Amanfo 1997, 90).

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS): ECOWAS, founded in 1975, is a subregional group of fifteen countries. Eight of the countries are French speaking, five are English speaking and two speak Portuguese. The organization is comprised of Burkina Faso, Benin, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. Its mission is to promote economic integration in all fields of economic activity, particularly industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions, and social and cultural matters.

ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG): ECOMOG is a nonstanding military force consisting of land, sea, and air components that were set up by ECOWAS member states to deal with the security problem that followed the collapse of the formal state structure in the Republic of Liberia in 1990. The force successfully restored an atmosphere that permitted the reinstatement of a functional state structure in Liberia (Khobe 2000, 9).

Military Intervention: Military intervention is a conflict management measure which is normally undertaken when all other instruments of power have fallen short of resolving a conflict. It deals with the use of military force to restore and maintain peace in a conflict zone. Military interventions are normally prompted by acute humanitarian problems. The armed forces are mostly heavily armed and ready to be involved in combat in their pursuit of peace. Intervention missions may not always have legitimate mandates (Laremont 2002).

Peacekeeping: Peacemaking may be described as the peaceful actions undertaken by the United Nations, a regional organization, or a multinational force, to create a stable environment conducive for peacemaking and development of a comprehensive political settlement of disputes to take place at the invitation of the warring factions. It involves military operations without enforcement powers, carried out to help maintain or restore international peace and security in conflict areas (Adu-Amanfoh 1997, 23). Peacekeeping is normally carried out under the auspices of UN's Charter, Chapter VI. "The term peacekeeping is used broadly to denote a military or police force deployed at the request of a government or a representative group of political and military actors that enjoys wide recognition (Berman and Sam, 2000, 25).

Standing Force: A standing force is a military body that is set aside, equipped, trained and prepared for the reason for which it was set aside. It is not committed to any other duty and is, in principle, available to be employed promptly when needed. The concept of a standing force is different from that of the stand-by arrangement that the UN has with its troop contributing countries. With a stand-by arrangement, troops are merely pledged for future commitment but are not kept solely for that purpose. Troops under a

stand-by arrangement go about their normal duties until they are required. In this case it takes a very long time for troops so promised to be offered.

UN Charter, Chapters VI and VII: Within the UN Charter, Chapter VI, is a protocol which mandates peacekeeping forces to be committed into a theatre with a legitimate UN mandate, based upon a Security Council Resolution, that permits the force to use force only in self defense. A peacekeeping mission under this provision is lightly armed and equipped just to be able to defend itself should the need arise. Chapter VII, on the other hand, is a UN protocol provision which provides for UN-sponsored missions to be employed with the capability to enforce peace in a conflict zone. Chapter VII mandates troops to use the requisite force to maintain peace in a theater. Forces operating under this chapter are therefore to be fully armed to enable them both defend themselves and also enforce the peace in any theater. The UN is not normally comfortable invoking this chapter of the Charter because of the obvious increased risk on the part of peacekeepers during such missions. The UN Security Council invoked this chapter during NATO Operations in Kosovo in 1998 and Operation Uphold Democracy, in 1994, in Haiti.

UN Stand-by Agreement: This is an arrangement established by the UN in 1994, with member countries, with the aim of improving the organization's capacity for rapid deployment of peacekeeping missions. The purpose is to have a precise understanding of the forces and other capabilities that a member country will have available at a given time. Under the system, a member state earmarks resources, such as military units, individual civilian and military personnel, specialized services, and equipment, which it can make available for use during future UN peacekeeping operations.

Limitations

One limitation on this research study is the scarcity of current literature on ECOMOG operations. Additionally, it was not possible to interview more than a few soldiers who have participated in ECOMOG's operations during the conduct of this research while residing in the Kansas City area.

Delimitations

The entire causes of conflicts in the subregion are beyond the scope of this study. This study will only focus on the reasons for the conflicts in countries in the subregion where the ECOMOG force has been employed. The research will then examine why ECOWAS continues employing the force and the possibility of the force becoming a standing one. The research will finally analyze the policy implications of the existence of the force in the subregion and how the force can become more effective and relevant in the subregion.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this research project is to determine the relevance and importance and future role of ECOMOG in West Africa. The project will seek to establish the need for ECOWAS to continue employing ECOMOG by reviewing its security protocol, to include establishing a standing headquarters for the force. Since the evolution of ECOMOG, it has been hailed as a model for subregional intervention operations. It has also served as a stop-gap in containing conflicts in the subregion before the U.N. gets involved. Against this background, the research will determine how

ECOWAS can overcome its problems and continue to play that vital role in the subregion.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The materials used in this study come from various sources. They include books, articles, periodical, newspapers, interviews, and the Internet. Data and materials collected on the study are classified into three categories:

1. A background study of the causes of the conflict in some West African countries, including the conflict in Liberia in 1990.
2. A review of official reports on ECOMOG operations in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, and Côte d'Ivoire. These include reports and books on ECOMOG operations regarding the success attained and difficulties encountered.
3. A review of some peacekeeping operations, including intervention operations, by UN and other regional bodies.

Materials on Causes of the Conflict in the Subregion

The causes of the Liberian conflict in 1990 can be traced back further than that year. The Justice and Peace Commission in Liberia trace this in their book *The Liberian Crisis*. The conflict is described as one of the most destructive and senseless civil wars recorded in history. (Justice and Peace Commission in Liberia 1994, 10). The cause of the conflict is traced to both remote and immediate reasons. The book recounts the remote causes to historical tension that existed between the indigenous population and descendants of the settlers, the total absence of development of the rural areas, corruption in the country and the indiscipline of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). The book also

identifies the immediate cause of the conflict, such as the introduction of multi party politics into the country by late President William Tolbert in 1971, and his subsequent overthrow in a coup d'etat in 1980 by, then, Master Sergeant Samuel K. Doe.

Reports on ECOMOG Operations

The inception of ECOMOG and its operations have been seen as a positive contribution to the West African subregional body in its effort at resolving intra-state conflicts. In his book, *The Causes of War and the Consequences of Peacekeeping in Africa*, Ricardo Rene Laremont hails the ECOWAS move in using ECOMOG to intervene in intra-state conflicts. The writer adds that it is only the creation of effective security arrangements for conflict resolutions that could ensure Africa's stability and development. Laremont believes that developed countries are no longer willing to directly contribute troops as part of military intervention forces in Africa. In his book he suggests that the U.S and France's proposal of ACRI and Renforcement des Capacities Africaines de Maintien de la Paix (RECAMP), respectively, are indirect ways of asking the African continent to be ready to resolve its own conflicts. These programs were aimed at training selected African militaries to improving their capacity at peacekeeping and peace enforcement. He argues that despite the initial problems of ECOMOG in Liberia in 1990, the intervention force has become a model for all subregions to emulate (Laremont 2000, 16).

In a paper, "Every Car or Moving Object Gone: The ECOMOG Intervention in Liberia," the *African Studies Quarterly Journal* discussed the creation of ECOMOG through to its exit from Liberia in 1998. It describes the Liberian conflict as an off-shoot of the demise of the Cold War in which about 200,000 civilians died and 1.2 million

people were displaced, out of a prewar population of 2.5 million. It touches on the reasons for ECOMOG's deployment and the difficulties it faced. The paper also deliberates on the peculiar situation that confronted ECOMOG at its inception. These include the fact that the force was first created for peacekeeping but had to metamorphose into an enforcement force due to the opposition it faced from the main warring faction (NPFL) during the initial days in Liberia. ECOMOG's strong points and weaknesses are also mentioned in the paper. The final part of the paper subscribes to the school of thought that despite ECOMOG's difficulties, the outcome in Liberia (as of 1997) was commendable since it halted the senseless carnage in the country that began in 1990.

The creation of ECOMOG is also seen as an emerging indigenous African peacekeeping capability. Rasheed Draman and David Carment side with this school of thought in their paper, "Managing Chaos in the West African Subregion: Assessing the Role of ECOMOG in Liberia." The first section of their paper traces the birth of ECOMOG. In the second section, the authors argue that the course of ECOWAS diplomacy in Liberia was fraught with problems and resulted in many short comings. The paper concludes with the thought that ECOMOG's efforts in Liberia helped stabilized the subregion as a whole.

In their document, *Waging War to Keep Peace*, the Human Rights Organization revisits the background of the Liberian conflict. The document enumerates the events in Liberia from 1990 to 1998, including discussions about the warring factions and the various accords signed during the period. The apathy, or unwillingness, of US and the UN to respond promptly and directly to the conflict in the subregion are also discussed.

The document ends with a section recounting lessons learned and recommendations for ECOWAS, the UN, and the US

Materials on Peacekeeping Including Intervention Operations
by UN and Subregional Bodies:

In his book, *Understanding United Nations System and Second Generation Peacekeeping*, Mr. Frank Adu-Amanfoh stresses the shift from the traditional means of peacekeeping missions since the end of the Cold War. He explains that second generation peacekeeping has gained such importance that it is crucial for conventional forces to be conversant with its concepts and principles. He argues that the natures of conflicts since the collapse of the former Soviet Union have taken a very different form and these demand more than traditional means of conflict resolution. Adu-Amanfoh recounts that recent conflicts in the subregion are more intra-state than inter-state. The conflicts are therefore, value based, deep rooted, and less amenable to conciliation with a higher possibility of spreading into other territories, if not checked (Adu-Amanfoh 1997, 90). The author, in his conclusion, asserts that peace enforcement or military intervention as a tool for resolving intra-state conflicts has come to stay.

International Intervention: Sovereignty versus Responsibility, written by Michael Keren and Donald A Sylvan, is another book that examines the need for military interventions. The writers question whether sovereignty of a country must be respected under all conditions or overlooked for the sake of preventing catastrophic humanitarian disasters. The book outlines the role of such military intervention forces and how their activities can be distinguished from forceful occupation or breach of sovereignty. The UN and other subregional bodies experience in some intervention operations are also

discussed. The book further outlines principles covering whether, when and how to intervene.

Thomas R. Mockaiti also writes about the changing paradigm in civil conflict and the need to counter or resolve it *with* equally new ways of peacekeeping. In his book, *Peace Operations and Intra-state Conflict*, he states that “civil conflict intervention has come to stay; the time for a new approach has come” (1999, 125). The book reviews intervention operations in Congo, Somalia and former Yugoslavia and explains that they were peculiar and unique in their own rights. The author emphasizes that the nature of the conflicts in those areas required intervention operations just as much as current intra-state conflicts.

“The Security Imperatives of the Crises in West Africa: Preliminary Thoughts” is another monograph about ECOMOG operations. It was written by Dr. Abubakar Momoh. In his monograph, Dr. Momoh describes the various forms of conflict in the subregion and emphasizes that almost all the countries in the subregion have faced one form of conflict or the other since the end of the Cold War. He praises the efforts of ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone since the interventions prevented spillover effects in the subregion. Dr. Momoh also touches on the apparent schism that existed between Anglophone and Francophone countries in ECOWAS in 1990 prior to the creation of the force. Finally, the lessons from the intervention strategy are also discussed.

Eboe Hutchful has also authored a monograph on the ECOWAS intervention force. In the monograph, “The ECOMOG Experience with Peacekeeping in West Africa,” he advocates the significance of ECOMOG operations as the pioneer in peacekeeping activities in the subregion. The author argues that despite repeated setbacks

in Liberia, ECOMOG's operation in the country was successful for several key reasons. The legality and legitimacy of ECOMOG's operations are also covered as well as the military, political and diplomatic challenges that confront the subregion during this present era of unending intra-state conflicts.

The creation of ECOMOG is also seen as one of the best things that has happened to the subregion after the Cold War in terms of resolving intrastate conflicts. In his monograph, a former Force Commander of ECOMOG, Brigadier General Mitikishe Maxwell Khobe, traces the birth of ECOMOG to the security protocols (Chapter V, Articles 13 and 14) of ECOWAS which advocated the creation of a standing military force called Allied Armed Forces of the Community (AAFC). In his monograph "The Evolution and Conduct of ECOMOG Operations in West Africa," he explains that, due to the initial differences among the five members of the ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee (SMC), Nigeria rallied some Anglophone countries, in addition to Francophone Guinea, to set up ECOMOG. The author recounts the force's concept of operations and command and control structure and draws lessons for the future of the force. Finally, he advocates ECOMOG as a basic model for the subregion's peacekeeping and peace enforcement capacity building.

In summary, this chapter looked at some of the materials on the Liberian conflict situation in 1990 and the evolution of ECOMOG as an intervention force for ECOWAS. It also covered materials on ECOMOG's operations, and some UN and regional intervention missions. There are, however, numerous periodicals which were assessed in the course of the research. It is a blend of all these materials that forms the basis of this research.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design method used during the conduct of this research. The methodology used is the historical method. It aims to evaluate the case study by using both primary and secondary sources of data and information to establish the reason why ECOWAS continues employing ECOMOG as a conflict resolution mechanism during intra-state conflicts in the West Africa subregion.

Methodology

The first part of this research method was to gather information from various sources, including both primary and secondary materials. The materials are then analyzed to ascertain the relevance of the information in view of the paper's thesis statement. The information contained in the materials will be later evaluated in a broader context to arrive at a wider conclusion. The qualitative method that will be used here has six steps: identification of the problem, developing a hypothesis, collection and classification of source materials, organization of facts into results, formation of conclusions and synthesis and presentation in an organized form (Menning 2002, 1).

Step One: Identification and Isolation of the Problem

In his book, *The Causes of War and the Consequences of Peacekeeping in Africa*, Ricardo Rene Laremont hails the ECOWAS move in using ECOMOG to intervene in intra-state conflicts in the West African subregion. He argues that, despite the initial problems of ECOMOG in Liberia in 1990, the intervention force has become a model for

all subregions to emulate (Laremont 2002, 16). In a paper, *Strategic Policy Failure and State Fragmentation: Security Peacekeeping, and Democratization in Sierra Leone*, Yusuf Bangura strongly endorses the need for a subregional peacekeeping force like ECOMOG in West Africa. He however adds that such a force will be needed and employed primarily as a stop-gap measure to establish the right atmosphere to enable the achievement of long-term political settlements (Bangura 1997, 165).

In Accra, on 30 September 2004, ECOWAS member states, at the 10th Defense and Security Commission meeting in Accra, the capital of Ghana, pledged to contribute units to the proposed 6,500 strong ECOWAS standby force to enhance its capacity for peace support operations in the subregion. Lieutenant General Seth Obeng, Chief of Defence Staff of the Ghana Armed Forces, urged members of the Commission to resolve, in the interest of its people, to do everything possible to influence positively on the lingering problems that beset Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Liberia (GNA September 2004). All these therefore emphasizes the fact that the West African subregion is very susceptible to intra-state conflicts and ECOMOG, as an intervention force, would probably have to be employed anytime there is conflict in the subregion.

Step Two: Development of a Hypothesis

The first time ECOWAS employed ECOMOG as an intervention force was in August, 1990 in Liberia which lasted until 1998. Even though there were difficulties, the force was able to maintain peace and oversee a democratically-elected government installed in 1997 (ECOWAS Official Web Site 2003, 1). Since the Liberia operation, ECOWAS has subsequently employed ECOMOG as an intervention force in Sierra Leone (1998), Guinea Bissau (1998), Côte d' Ivoire (2002) and back again in Liberia (

2003). Current developments in the subregion seem to point to the fact that ECOMOG operations have become a vital tool in conflict resolutions in the subregion. The hypothesis for this research work is that ECOWAS will continue to employ ECOMOG in military intervention operations because of ECOMOG's record of success. This hypothesis is based on the analysis that since its first intervention operations in Liberia, ECOWAS has successfully employed the force in four other intervention operations.

Step Three: Collection and Classification of Source Materials

Data collected on the study are classified into three categories:

1. A background study of the causes of the conflict in some countries in the subregion.
2. A review of some official reports on ECOMOG Operations. These include reports and books on highlights of success and difficulties of the force.
3. A review of peacekeeping operations including intervention operations by UN and other regional bodies.

Step Four: Organizing of the Facts into Results

The data collected will present a three-part analysis of ECOWAS' use of ECOMOG as a conflict resolution mechanism in the West Africa subregion.

1. Part one will analyze the reasons why ECOWAS continues to employ ECOMOG as a conflict resolution mechanism in the subregion.
2. Part two will discuss the possibility of ECOMOG becoming a standing force and the policy implications for the subregion.

3. Part three will explore ways of making ECOMOG more effective and relevant for the subregion.

Step Five: Formation of Conclusions

From the analysis of the data in step four, concrete conclusions will be derived regarding why ECOWAS continues to employ ECOMOG in intervention operations in the subregion. This will also cover the possibility of the force becoming a standing force, its policy implications and ways of making ECOMOG more effective and relevant in the West African subregion.

Step Six: Synthesis and Presentation

In this study, there are five chapters and each chapter covers a specific portion of analytical research as follows:

1. Chapter 1 delineates the problem and provides background to the conflict situation in the subregion.
2. Chapter 2 reviews materials (books and reports) on the causes of the conflicts in ECOMOG employed countries, ECOMOG operations since 1990, and some military intervention operations and peacekeeping.
3. Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology used in the study.
4. Chapter 4 presents the analysis of why ECOWAS continues using ECOMOG in intervention operations in the subregion, the feasibility of the force becoming a standing force with its policy implications and ways of making ECOMOG more effective and relevant in the subregion.

5. Chapter 5 is the conclusion and will include a summation of the analysis and recommendations towards making the force more effective and relevant in the subregion.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter of the research will analyze the data and material collected. The analysis will consist of three parts:

1. Part one will analyze the reasons why ECOWAS continue to employ ECOMOG as a conflict resolution mechanism in the subregion.
2. Part two will discuss the possibility of ECOMOG becoming a standing force and the policy implications for the subregion.
3. Part three will explore ways of making ECOMOG more effective and relevant to the long-term stability and development of the subregion.

PART 1

Why ECOWAS Continues to Employ ECOMOG

The issue of military intervention in another country's internal conflict is a very sensitive subject. Opponents to military intervention operations have always used the issue of sovereignty of the individual country as a key blocking point. According to the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, the threshold for outside intervention should be the grave breach of humanitarian law, such as genocide or ethnic cleansing. Military intervention should also be the last resort that any regional body must employ. Chapter VII of the UN Charter deals with "Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of Peace, and Acts of Aggression." Parts of the charter authorize the UN to undertake military intervention in situations where threats or

breaches of peace exist in the face of humanitarian disaster. These notwithstanding, the international community, on some occasions, have carried out military intervention operations where not only humanitarian, but moral and ethical issues were at stake as well. Apart from the efforts by the UN, some countries, like the US and regional bodies like NATO, have, on their own, intervened in conflict situations elsewhere operating under the banner of humanitarian crises and threat to stability and have been criticized by the international community for doing so.

ECOMOG interventions in the subregion, for the past fourteen years, have equally faced similar criticisms. Despite these criticisms, in addition to its numerous problems, ECOWAS continued to employ ECOMOG on four subsequent intervention operations in the subregion after the initial one in Liberia. The question is why has the subregional body continued using ECOMOG as part of its conflict resolution mechanism? An attempt to analyze the question will reveal external as well as internal reasons.

External Reasons

The disappearance of the Soviet “threat” in Africa after the Cold War also marked the beginning of the United States’ departure. Within three years of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the State Bureau of African Affairs lost seventy positions and consulates in Kenya, Cameroon and Nigeria were scheduled to be closed. The United States Agency for International Development’s African Desk lost between thirty and forty officers out of a normal staff size of 130. The end of the global ideological tug-of-war between the United States and the former Soviet Union marginalized Africa in United States foreign policy and the international community. Africa’s strategic interest had come to an end.” (Laremont 2002, 26)

Lack of Willpower on the Part of the US

ECOWAS continues using military intervention operations in the subregion due to the lack of will by the developed countries to participate directly in African conflict situations. This situation became more prominent after the US's experience in Somalia during Operation Restore Hope where nineteen US soldiers lost their lives. This prompted the US to review circumstances that could enable it to be directly involved in intervention operations outside their country. In May 1994, President Clinton signed Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25, which established strict conditions for US participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions (U.S Department of State, Bureau of International Organizational Affairs. 1996, 1-2).

The events in Somalia, however, had a longer impact. With Somalia fresh on their minds, American policy makers and the international community turned a blind eye to events in Rwanda. Secretary of State Madeline Albright recognized this when she said, "We, the international community should have been more active during the early days of the atrocities in Rwanda in 1994 and called them what there were: genocide" (Laremont 2002. 27). This was a clear indication of a shift in American foreign policy towards Africa, which aimed at placing the responsibility of African political and humanitarian problems in African hands. This reality scared the subregional body to be proactive if it was to avert the Rwanda-like situations where the international community acted too late.

New Foreign Assistance Training Programs by US, France, and Britain

Recent foreign policy moves by the developed countries especially, US, France and Britain also send clear signals that developed countries will no longer be directly involved in military intervention operations in West Africa. Therefore, they have

introduced foreign assistance training programs aimed at building the peacekeeping capacities of selected African countries. The first such program started by the US was known as the “African Crisis Response Initiative” (ACRI). The focus was to develop the affected countries’ military capacity to manage conflict on the continent. The US government concluded agreements with five countries and completed the three-year program at brigade and battalion level, by November 2002. The countries that benefited include Ghana, Benin, Mali, Uganda, Malawi, Kenya and Senegal. Under Operation Focused Relief, the US again trained seven battalions from Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal.

Six of these battalions were later to be part of the troops that deployed in Sierra Leone. After President Clinton, President George W. Bush also continued the policy of non-direct involvement by introducing ACOTA. France also introduced RECAMP with the intention to also build the peacekeeping capabilities especially of the Francophone militaries in Africa. At least 32 African countries received training under RECAMP with eight from West Africa (Berman 2002, 3-4).

Unlike US and France, Britain focused their packages on peace support training for African military officers. The central goal of the British program is to assist and develop national military staff colleges into centers of excellence for regional and subregional training. Two African based British Military Advisory and Training Teams (BMATTs), BMATT Southern Africa (in Zimbabwe) and BMATT West Africa (in Ghana), have since the early nineties, been providing annual instruction to officers from host countries as well as other African countries (Eric and Sam 2000, 319-320). These policies of the developed countries all point to the fact that Africa in general would have

to resolve its own conflicts. ECOWAS therefore has no option but to use ECOMOG if it wants to re-establish peace in order to potentially resolve its own conflicts.

Though a laudable idea, these program need to be tailored to suit the West African environment by involving the countries to benefit in the planning stage and including equipment as part of the package. Without the equipment, participating countries will still not be very effective in the field. Additionally, the training must not only cover operations but also logistics planning and multinational and interagency coordination. It must, however, be stressed that, France despite its training initiatives continue to directly participate in intervention operations in Africa. Currently, France has a contingent of ground troops in Côte d' Ivoire.

UN Reaction Time to Conflicts in Africa

Powerful Security Council members, like US and UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali, concluded by 1994 that the UN itself should not seek to conduct large-scale enforcement activities. Consequently, for enforcement of its decisions, the Security Council increasingly resorted to “coalitions of the willing” such as Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti in 1994 (Adebajo and Sriram 2001, 47). The Security Council also supported, in qualified terms, enforcement activities by subregional bodies notably, ECOMOG. On 1 November 1995, UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali stated that, “it is increasingly apparent that UN cannot address every potential and actual conflict troubling the world and that subregional bodies must take the lead role during such crises” (UN A/50/711 1995, para. 4). In another report to the Security Council, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, on 13 April 1998, stated that, “within the context of the United Nations primary responsibility for matters of international peace and security,

providing support for regional and subregional initiatives in Africa is both necessary and desirable. Such support is necessary because the United Nations lack the capacity, resources and expertise to address all problems that may arise in Africa” (UN Document A/52/871 1998a, para 41). As a result of this policy, the UN has been very slow in reaction to conflicts in the subregion. Since the Liberian conflict in 1990, the UN has always looked to ECOWAS to intervene in conflicts in the subregion before getting involved. In Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire, ECOWAS had to employ ECOMOG before the UN got involved later on after almost three years (November 1992), eight months (October 1999) and sixteen months (February 2004) respectively.

This slow reaction by the UN is a major reason why ECOWAS continues to employ ECOMOG as a conflict resolution mechanism. The failure of the UN to also exhibit more commitment in Rwanda in 1994, during UNAMIR Operations, is also an additional reason why ECOWAS continues using ECOMOG as a key component of conflict resolution in the subregion. UN’s demonstrated lack of commitment was very glaring as it reduced the authorized strength of the force by almost 90 percent (from 2548 to 270) when the violence in Rwanda escalated (UN Document S/RES/912, 1994).

The Need for Collective Responsibility

The issue of collective responsibility at the regional level is also another reason why ECOWAS continues to use ECOMOG as a key element of conflict resolution. Regional bodies have been more concerned about conflicts or world issues that affect them in common. NATO intervened in Kosovo, but not in Rwanda. This is because the situation in Kosovo threatened the stability of Europe at the time while the genocide in Rwanda did not have any direct impact on Europe. By necessity then, African

subregional organizations have taken up the task of planning and coordinating security matters. This is the reason why subregional organizations like the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and in East Africa the Inter-Government Authority on Development (IGAD), which were initially established as economic bodies, have now added a security function within their charters (Institute of National Strategic Studies 1998, 6). Most recently in 1999, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) established a similar mechanism known as Council for Peace and Security for Central Africa (COPAX). In the year 2000, the East African Cooperation actively discussed the possibility of concluding a defense treaty that would provide subregional peacekeeping operations (Berman and Sam 2000, 5). With the responsibility of security being, by default, the task of African subregional organizations, ECOWAS continues to use ECOMOG in order to maintain the collective responsibility for stability in the subregion.

AU's Aspirations of an African Standing Force

In line with current conflict situations on the African continent, the AU is recalling the dream of its pioneers, like Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (first president of Ghana), to establish an African Stand-by Force (ASF) to be used by the organization to assist during conflict situations (Terry 2003, 1). The AU is thus developing a common security policy that will establish, by 2010, an ASF capable of rapid deployment to either keep or enforce the peace. The ASF will comprise one brigade in each of the five African regions and incorporate a police and civilian capacity as well (Mallam 2004, 2). With this future concept in mind, ECOWAS needs to maintain the ECOMOG concept. This will make it much easier to incorporate into the larger AU ASF concept by 2010. Additionally, if

ECOMOG continues to exist up to the establishment of the AU force, by virtue of its experience, the force is likely to be given a more prominent role in the ASF to the political benefit of the subregion.

Internal Reasons

The Peculiar Nature of African Conflict and the Need for Prompt Reaction

The natures of subregional conflicts are strange and peculiar. “These conflicts are cruel, protracted, make no distinction between combatants and civilians, often have no discernable political agenda (unlike the Cold war insurgencies), and are relatively resistant to external pressure” (Hutchful 1998, 1). These types of conflicts require a prompt response to avert escalation.

Conflicts in any country in the subregion invariably affect its neighbors, especially due to the ECOWAS protocol that allows foreigners within the subregion to travel without visas to any ECOWAS member country for ninety days. The existence of such an intervention force would provide the capacity for the subregional body to evacuate non-combatants in the conflict zone. Additionally, ECOWAS continues to use ECOMOG because it is almost always readily available to attend to conflicts in the subregion. Prompt response to these situations is very important in the West African since conflicts in the subregion, if not curtailed promptly, have the potential to spill over or affect other countries in the subregion. Having and maintaining the capacity to intervene is one way of saving other nationals who would be trapped in any intra-state conflict in the subregion.

Lack of Cultural Understanding of the West African Subregion

Another reason why ECOMOG forces have been employed by ECOWAS is the need to have troops who understand the culture of the people. The people of the subregion, despite their differences, have a high degree of recognition and respect for their clan leaders, village heads and chiefs. These cultural practices call for more tolerance and diligence in dealing with these societal leaders and have the tendency to slow the dialogue process.

Troops from the western world are not familiar with the culture of the subregion and are perceived as not having the tolerance and temper to contain the locals during these conflicts. The threat of peace in the subregion normally comes from nonstate actors or substate actors and units. Warring parties constantly go against accords or agreements which prolong the conflicts. For instance, in the first Liberian conflict, the rebel groups increased from the initial three to nine major and many minor factions eventually requiring nine separate peace or cease-fire agreements (Tuck 2004, 3). The US military culture of decisiveness is not likely to tolerate such indecisiveness during military intervention operations. The experience of the US in Somalia is a clear example of the need for troops who operate in the subregion to know about the culture, geography, terrain, and lifestyle of the people to be effective.

Requisite for Economic Development and Integration in the Subregion

All ECOWAS countries are among the least developed countries in the world attributed mostly to insecurity and instability in the subregion. One of the goals of ECOWAS, as a subregional organization, is to integrate the economies of the countries in the region. In furtherance of this, there is the plan to use a common currency in the

subregion by the year 2006. All this will, however, not materialize if the security of the region is not assured. The need for rapid economic development is one of the main reasons that cause the subregion's leaders to use ECOMOG as a conflict resolution mechanism in intervention operations.

PART 2

ECOMOG as a Standing Force

Requirement of a Standing Force

The idea of ECOMOG becoming a permanent standing force to be employed for conflicts in the subregion is laudable. If it materializes, there will be an immediate force with the right number of troops to intervene in conflict situations as and when they occur. Such a force will be more efficient since it will have more time to train when not in theatre. This will also reduce the problem of interoperability as the troops from different countries will train with their counterparts on basic tactics, techniques, and standing operating procedures (SOPs). A standing ECOMOG force can even be an effective deterrent to would-be rebels and coup plotters in the subregion and give the right leverage to governments to manage the affairs of their respective countries.

A standing force would be composed of military troops and equipment from all the West African Countries and would be solely dedicated to the use of the ECOWAS Secretariat. The 1999 ECOWAS protocol called for the establishment of a stand-by force of brigade size consisting of specially trained and equipped national armies ready to be deployed at short notice. All the fifteen ECOWAS countries have pledged one battalion each to the proposed new force (Adebajo 2003, 152). The force would be called ECOMOG and will have the main tasks of observing and monitoring, peacekeeping,

humanitarian intervention, enforcement of sanctions and embargos, preventive deployment, peace building operations, and policing activities. The stand-by force will organize periodic combined training to improve cohesion.

Even though the concept of a standing force is impressive, there are a lot of conditions and issues which need to be resolved before the concept could be realized in the subregion. The first issue that comes to mind is funding. The setting up of such a force would require that troops and equipment of various countries remain uncommitted and available for training. Such conditions will be a serious drain on the countries in the subregion in terms of personnel, equipment, and finance. From past ECOMOG operations, it is quite clear that most of the countries in the subregion, apart from Nigeria and Ghana, would find it very difficult to devote battalion strength of troops and equipment for that purpose. In addition, continuous training of these troops will be very costly for the countries. The idea of ECOMOG becoming a standing force is therefore not feasible at the present time due to economic cost.

Another problem that the subregion may face is the question of where to locate the force. Even though on the surface it might not seem to be a problem, a thorough understanding of the culture of the subregion will reveal real problems associated with it. The location of such a force is likely to have social and security implications for the country hosting it. While the particular countries military and political opponents will feel intimidated, the hosting government will be secure to the extent that, it will not bother to be dictatorial. On the other hand, the idea of leaving the troops to be in their respective countries will however not permit combined training and will reduce speed of reaction time. Countries would also end up using their troops in their respective countries

and will therefore not be available when needed by the force. This therefore makes the idea of having a standing force a nonstarter.

Another problem associated with having a standing force is that intervention cases in the subregion differ from country to country and need to be approached on a case-by-case basis. Some conflicts in the subregion involve more than one country. Such a situation will demand that the interested parties do not participate in the intervention operations. There could be political issues if troops from particular countries, who have trained together as a force, are excluded from participation for such reasons. There is also likely to be great difficulty if ECOMOG has to intervene in a country like Nigeria. It is not likely that there would be an intervention operation by ECOMOG in Nigeria if any conflict situation brews up. This is because of the sheer size of the country (924,000 square kilometers) and the fact that ECOMOG, without Nigeria, would lack the manpower, equipment, willpower and funding for the operations. Nigeria's non participation in the Guinea-Bissau operations accounted significantly for its weakness (Adebajo 2002a, 16). The idea of making ECOMOG a standing force is therefore not ideal if it would not be employed in all circumstances. The current concept of raising the force, as and when the situation demands, should therefore be maintained.

Standing Headquarters Concept

The resulting analysis from the above discussions would lead one to the realization that, a more meaningful and less costly venture would be for ECOMOG to have a standing headquarters. The Standing Headquarters would be made up of command and control elements that would be located at the ECOWAS Secretariat. Such a team would have the ability to monitor the early warning systems of ECOWAS and engage in

long term planning from five to ten years. The standing headquarters concept would also greatly enhance the cohesion of command and be present to be actively involved in the early planning decisions of ECOWAS. It would also be less costly. Such a team will also be able to build enough data to strengthen the intelligence on rebel groups in the subregion and understand the cultural, political, and economic context of the conflict, as well as the tactical situation, before troops are launched into theatre. The existence of this headquarters would also enable a coherent exit strategy to be planned well ahead of operations.

Policy Implications for the Subregion

Societies which have emerged from conflict have special needs. To avoid a return to conflict while laying a solid foundation for development, emphasis must be placed on critical priorities such as encouraging reconciliation and demonstrating respect for human rights; fostering political inclusiveness and promoting national unity. (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001, 40).

The continued use of ECOMOG as a conflict resolution tool in the subregion will continue to have policy implications for West Africa's leaders. These will include the policies on funding the force, reviewing defense policies, discouraging the practice of harboring dissidents or rebels from neighboring countries, and abhorring military coups.

Commitment to Funding the Force

For ECOMOG to be more relevant and effective, the subregion's leaders must make serious commitment with regards to resourcing the force. Any non-committed attitude from ECOWAS leaders will negatively affect ECOMOG's activities and eventually result in countries either refusing to participate in missions or conducting pre-

mature withdrawals from missions. The subregion's leaders need to acknowledge that peacekeeping is very expensive in the short term, but for the sake of stability in the region, a priority must be placed on funding the force's operations.

Reviewing Defense and Foreign Policies.

The existence of the ECOMOG Force will require a review of the foreign and defense policies of countries in the subregion. Policies of non-interference in internal affairs of other countries will have to be reviewed to accommodate the ECOMOG intervention concept. Some countries in the subregion, especially the Francophone, have various defense pacts with their colonial master. These countries would also need to review these pacts to include the capability of unilaterally employing their military in ECOMOG intervention operations (Ndiaye 2005). Ultimately, countries in the subregion will have to renounce some of their sovereign prerogatives related to defense and foreign policy for the greater good of the stability of the subregion. Additionally, the principle of noninterference in internal affairs will have to be reconsidered.

Abhorrence of Military Coups

As a subregion, the leaders of ECOWAS member-states have formally committed to the rejection of military coups, as was the situation in Sierra Leone in 1998. All the subregion's leaders must remain committed in refusing to recognize any government that comes to power through a coup and take concrete measures to oust any such regime. It is in this light that one commends the subregion's leaders for condemning the unlawful take-over of the government of Togo by the son of the late president of Togo, Gyasingbe Eyadema, on 5 February 2005. This bold step reaffirmed the commitment of the

subregion's leaders to democratic governance. The enormous and unanimous pressure and condemnation from the subregional body led to the ultimate settlement of the standoff with an interim President and a run for elections in sixty days. Even though the situation has not yet been resolved, it is heartening to know that the leaders in the subregion are united in the principle of condemning any coup in the region. Such a policy for the leaders will, however, be very difficult to maintain as some current leaders in the subregion, like the president of Burkina Faso, have military backgrounds and came to power via coups.

Discouraging the Practice of Harboring Dissidents or Rebels from Neighboring Countries

The subregion's leaders also need to discourage the practice of harboring dissidents or rebels from neighboring countries. A study of the three conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau reveals series of allegations of subregional leaders supporting rebel activities or dissident factions to destabilize neighboring regimes. Burkina Faso and Côte d' Ivoire assisted the NPFL in Liberia; Liberia and Burkina Faso assisted the RUF in Sierra Leone. Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Guinea also backed anti-NPFL faction in Liberia (Adebajo 2003, 139). ECOWAS leaders need to bear in mind that such acts will always undermine the role of ECOMOG. Leaders need to be resolved to desist from condoning such acts which are detrimental to the conflict resolution effort.

There must be a firm conviction on the part of the other leaders in the subregion not to recognize governments which come to power through this means. Added to this is the need to check the proliferation of arms in the subregion. Vast quantities of small arms remain in the hands of insurgents and are used to fuel the conflicts (UN Document

A/53/763, 1998). These arms are cheap and easily accessible thereby making the control of arms flow across the borders difficult. According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), in 1998 the regional arms market in the Sub-Saharan Africa grew by more than 50 percent from the previous year (247).

The Reality of Nigeria's Hegemony in the Subregion

The activities and contribution of Nigeria in terms of troops and funding in three of the four previous ECOMOG missions seems to justify the need for Nigeria to play the “big brother” role in ECOMOG missions. Nigeria with a population of 128.7 million, has a very large economic market with a GDP of \$125.7 billion (2004 est.). It also has a large military with an annual military expenditure of approximately \$544.6 million (2004 est.) These accord the country massive political, military, and economic might in the subregion and the region in general (CIA Fact Book 2005). Nigeria contributed almost ninety per cent of troops and funding for all the missions (Adebajo 2002a, 90). In Sierra Leone, it was a sole Nigerian effort, under the banner of ECOMOG that ousted the military junta. This role played by Nigeria needs to be harmonized by other countries in the subregion by specializing in aspects that will compliment the Nigerian effort. Other countries could provide other unique capabilities to the ECOMOG force while Nigeria plays the lead nation role by providing the bulk of the troops and funds. Other countries could account for roles like civil police, medical, transportation and movement, and engineer roles.

From the past ECOMOG operations, the force could not have been functional without the massive support of Nigeria. Nigeria should be given the lead nation role in ECOMOG's missions they decide to participate in and the other countries take up

specific specialized roles to achieve the needed coalition spirit for such intervention missions. Nigeria, as a country, would also have to recognize the role of the small countries and respect their views. It must not use its massive political, economic and military force to pursue its own foreign agenda. Some appointments and assignments of the force should also be given to other participants in order to build a cohesive coalition. In the ECOMOG operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone there were complaints of Nigerians dominating the positions in the high command (Adebajo 2002a, 91).

Reducing the Role of the Military in Politics in the Subregion

It needs to be emphasized that the continuous involvement of the military in resolving conflicts has the possibility of being misconstrued by the military. They can easily begin to believe that they are the solution to a long-term political settlement but not merely creating the conditions for it. Successes chalked by ECOMOG could be misinterpreted to mean that the military has the capacity to handle affairs of countries better than their civilian counterparts and prompt taking over affairs through coups. It is somewhat comforting to note that, majority of the military high commands in the subregion, have taken bold steps to increase education in this important aspect (Ghana News Agency, September 2004).

PART III

Ways of Making ECOMOG More Effective and Relevant

There are a lot of things that could be done to make ECOMOG more effective and relevant in the subregion. The issue will be dealt with by analyzing what the ECOWAS Secretariat, in conjunction with member-states, can do and what needs to be done by the intervention force itself.

By post-conflict peace-building, I mean actions undertaken at the end of a conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of armed confrontation. Experience has shown that the consolidation of peace in the aftermath of conflict requires more than purely diplomatic and military action, and that an integrated peace building effort is needed to address the various factors which have caused or are threatening a conflict. (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001, 40)

Efforts by ECOWAS Secretariat

Adoption of the AU's Peer Review Mechanism

The subregion's military intervention force concept has come to stay and ECOWAS will continue using ECOMOG to intervene in subsequent conflict situations. ECOWAS will, however, need to backup its efforts to make the force more effective and relevant. Since most of the conflicts can be traced to nondemocratic governance, the subregional body needs to encourage and ensure democratic governance in all the various member-states. ECOWAS must adopt the AU's system of a self-policing mechanism, as is currently found within the framework of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). This is a mechanism that allows peer governments to monitor each other to determine its ratings in terms of democratic governance and their capacity to govern effectively. Even though this mechanism is not the panacea to non-democratic governance, it could help put the presidents on the notice and point them in the direction of improving their style of governance and increasing their accountability to the governed.

Strengthening State Institutions

In line with the AU's peer review mechanism, countries in the subregion must deepen good governance and strengthen state institutions like parliament, the courts,

central banks, police service, and even civil society. These could be achieved through the establishment of such institutions as the Ombudsman, National Ethics Commission, and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice as it exists in Ghana (Adu Boahen 1996, 146-147). These institutions should be made politically independent such that they do not remain appendages to the ruling political party. The source of power or authority for the institutions should be the country's constitution. Once these institutions are distanced from political puppeteers, the government can then be held to the yardstick of probity, accountability and transparency. Furthermore, the subregion must encourage efforts to reconcile the victims of the various conflicts along the lines of reconciliation commissions undertaken by South Africa, Nigeria and Ghana. Even though such commissions will not be able to bring back the dead and heal the wounded, they can hold the offenders accountable and allow for the victims' relatives to reach closure and begin setting the stage for forgiveness. These will help foster togetherness, unity and national integration.

Early Warning System

The ECOWAS security protocol of 1999 advocated for the establishing of an Observation and Monitoring Center within the ECOWAS Secretariat. This center would be responsible for providing early warning of conflicts in the subregion. The concept calls for the establishing observation centers in four zones. The first zone is to be based in Banjul, Gambia (to cover Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, and Senegal); the second is to be based in Cotonou, Benin (to cover Benin, Nigeria, and Togo); the third in Monrovia, Liberia (to cover Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone), and fourth in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (to cover Burkina Faso, Côte d' Ivoire, Mali, and Niger). From these four

subregional headquarters, officials are expected to assess political, economic, social, security and environmental indicators on a daily basis (Adebajo 2002a, 150). Despite the good intentions of this concept, the agreement has not been ratified by all countries. Military personnel from an ECOMOG force standing headquarters (if created), could be assigned to assist their civilian counterparts at these centers with their expertise in security matters. These centers are intended to be able to give the required early warning of conflicts in the subregion to allow early settlement through other means. Early response to conflict situations would avert the unnecessary loss of lives and the needless destruction of property.

Use of Other Instruments of Power

ECOWAS must also endeavor to employ not only the military instrument of power but include all the others as well. Use of the economic, diplomatic and information instruments of power, would greatly complement the military role. It would appear that this aspect is lacking within the ECOWAS framework. The Secretariat could also lobby the UN and the international community extensively to support and back its missions with the requisite diplomatic cover and financial means. For instance, in 1999 when “Nigeria threatened to withdraw its troops from Sierra Leone citing funding as a reason, Britain hurriedly contributed approximately US \$15 million to ECOMOG following the announcement” (Adebajo 2002a, 94). If ECOMOG gets the legitimacy it needs, as in the Côte d’Ivoire intervention, it is more likely to facilitate its operations and be legitimate. ECOWAS must also plan and coordinate its intervention missions with various regional bodies, especially relief agencies and NGO’s, so as to facilitate the stability phase of ECOMOG’s intervention operations. ECOMOG missions have not been very promising

in this area in the past due to lack of funding, logistics and cooperation with relief agencies and NGOs.

Legitimacy and Neutrality of the Force

By far the most significant challenge to ECOMOG operations have been the legality of its interventions. Beyond merely justifying the intervention under humanitarian grounds, it is important to note that all ECOWAS member-countries have signed and ratified the 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression (PNA) and the 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance on Defence (MAD) (Adebajo 2002a, 35). ECOMOG interventions, therefore, need not only be justified but also legitimized vis-à-vis ECOWAS policies and protocols. In order for credibility of the operations to be established and a mandate created, the secretariat must devise a credible mandate for its operations since a clear and unambiguous mandate is one of the first and most important requirements of any peacekeeping or peace enforcement operation. The mandate and its terms of reference should be such that the resources provided in the form of troops and equipment will be enough to achieve the stated objectives. The secretariat should also include military input in the process of arriving at a mandate for the force. This would be helpful as the military could advise as to what is possible to achieve based on troops and equipment available (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001, 60).

Funding of the Missions

Poor funding has been another chronic problem of ECOMOG missions since its creation. The first Liberian mission was mainly sponsored by the primary participant, Nigeria. Nigeria alone contributed over \$1 billion while the rest of the countries provided

\$10 million, being one percent of the entire budget. From its inception, ECOWAS has never had sufficient funds to support it like a UN mission. The force has had to rely on voluntary contributions from member countries which could not be completely underwritten by them. Some countries had to withdraw their troops due to lack of funds.

In 1995, ECOMOG threatened to abandon the mission in Liberia before the international community assisted with more funds (Scheepers 1999, 11). Apart from the fact that inadequate funding affected the operational activities of the force, it also affected their ability to support the stability phase of the mission. ECOWAS will have to explore other means to generate funds for ECOMOG's missions. One possible way is to establish a voluntary fund to solicit from both member states and the G-8 countries. These funds would be dedicated solely to intervention operations. Additionally, the subregion could lobby the UN for funding assistance prior to missions being established.

ECOMOG's Own Initiatives

The measures that ECOMOG as a force could adopt to make it more relevant and effective would be to address the problems that it has encountered during its previous missions and explore new ways of operating. These problem areas include, inadequate logistics, need for combined training and command and control issues. The force could also explore new ways of operating by addressing its modus operandi, be cognizant of human rights issues and include civil police as participating troops.

The Need for Adequate Logistics and Prior Planning

Military operations cannot be conducted without a broad range of logistical support that includes airlift, sealift, sustainment, and service support forces. Lack of

adequate logistics has seriously impacted upon ECOMOG's four intervention operations thus far. Apart from the fact that logistics have been woefully inadequate, there is also a lack of coherent logistics planning. During the first mission in Liberia, most of the countries had to depend a lot on Nigeria for fuel and ammunition. ECOMOG troop contributing-countries did not coordinate their logistics needs prior to deployment in Liberia. Each country did what it could (Berman and Sam 2000, 92).

The operation in Sierra Leone did not factor logistics into the intervention plan and it seriously suffered from that omission. According to General Quainoo, mission planners of ECOMOG's first mission in Liberia did not make any sophisticated logistical calculations prior to deployment (Berman and Sam 2000, 92). In Côte d' Ivoire, ECOMCI benefited greatly from French generosity as it cooperated by providing some intelligence and maps for the force. The major issues have routinely been strategic air lift, in-theatre transport, communication equipments and fuel.

The issue of inadequate logistics planning was more evident during the first Liberia operation when the force had to deploy throughout the entire country. During that period, troops were widely dispersed without communications and transport. This made regular supply of rations very difficult and passage of information impossible. A shortage of trucks and helicopters as well as weapons and ammunition restricted the activities of the force and limited its effectiveness (Berman and Sam 2000, 119). Some countries could only afford to pay minimal wages to the troops and even that was not timely.

The serviceability state of most of the varied vehicles of the force also left much to be desired, not to mention a lack of interoperability at even the lowest levels. It must be stressed however, that in the area of strategic airlift, clothing and, to some extent,

communication equipment and in-theater transport, the US has routinely been very helpful. The US provided strategic airlift during ECOMOG's (Ghana Contingent) deployment in Sierra Leone, the second Liberian mission and ECOMCI in Côte d'Ivoire. The issue of logistics will have to be taken seriously by ECOMOG to make the force more successful on subsequent missions.

Operations and logistics plans need to be integrated and developed together. Just as any effective military operational planning, logistics planning must be an integral part of operations planning to enable appropriate coordination, synchronization, and sustainment of the force.

Combined and Relevant Training

Despite the repeated use of multinational peacekeeping and peace enforcement forces in West Africa over the past 15 years, there has been little-to-no combined (multinational) training of the subregion's military prior to any intervention operations. This situation has always brought about the problem of interoperability due to the different levels of peace keeping skills, differing doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures. These differences in language, equipment, and doctrine deprived ECOMOG of the necessary harmonization it required resulting in little synergy of the capabilities of the force.

A means of mitigating this deficit should be combined training of at least the command elements (which ACRI was designed to do), to enhance harmonizing of at least doctrine and SOP, before embarking on missions. Additionally, ECOMOG will have to take full advantage of programs like ACOTA and RECAMP to reach some form of harmonization prior to missions. A problem with the training offered by the US, as part

of the peacekeeping building capacity packaged, is that it is mainly focused on operations at the expense of logistics. The training should include logistics planning and actual resourcing so that the missions could be sustained.

Command and Control

Command and Control is the vital link between leadership and the troops. It encompasses the analysis, planning, decision making and communications necessary to direct military operations. Without it, military operations are likely to be scattered and indecisive. (Goodpaster 1996, 4)

ECOMOG Operations, from the beginning, have had serious challenges especially in the area of command and control. In Liberia, Nigeria was perceived as dominating the entire force headquarters. Almost all the key staff appointments at the force headquarters were Nigerian, with a few Ghanaians. The initial force commander was General Arnold Quainoo of Ghana but he was replaced under mysterious circumstances, after barely three months, with Nigerian General Joshua Dongonyaro. After this change, all subsequent force commanders were Nigerians with Ghanaians providing the deputy force commander (Adebajo 2002a, 91). In addition, there were problems of command as contingent commanders were reporting directly to their home countries and not the force commander. Contingents were therefore clarifying all orders with home governments before acting on them and this reduced reaction time in the theatre.

Another command issue was the absence of a permanent political leadership appointment in theatre like UN missions (Special Representative of the Secretary General) to provide overall command and control. In an attempt to rectify this lapse, Joshua Iroha of Nigeria was appointed as ECOWAS Special Representative in 1995 but

he was withdrawn after roughly two years due to lack of support from member states (Berman and Sam 2000, 107). During such intervention missions, it is necessary to have a political leader representing the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS as the head of mission who will set policy objectives, define the end state, and provide basic guidance, including contents of the rules of engagement (ROEs). It is from these that the military leader will develop the strategy, plan the campaign and prepare for assigned tactical operations (Adebajo 2002b, 7). With ECOMOG, the force commander has mostly always been the military leader as well as the political head in theatre during ECOMOG missions. This situation burdened the military commander as he had to travel back and forth to the ECOWAS Secretariat. As Liberian Interim President Amos Sawyer noted in 1994,

One weakness of ECOMOG is that there is no political office side by side the military. The political dimension has been missing here. The Force commander is saddled with an enormous responsibility. The ECOWAS Executive Secretary has made infrequent visits to Liberia. He is hardly seen on ground. (Berman and Sam 2000, 108).

In the future, ECOWAS should make the special representative concept a permanent feature of ECOMOG mission. Apart from reducing the workload on the military commander, it will also provide the opportunity for diplomacy and dialogue to be handled in theater.

Modus Operandi

ECOMOG must review its modus operandi bearing in mind the military peacekeeping principles of legitimacy, consent, neutrality, impartiality, perseverance, and restraint in the use of force. The first Liberian conflict saw ECOMOG fighting the main rebel party, NPFL, with the cooperation of the AFL and the INPFL. This practice

prolonged the conflict as ECOMOG was also seen as another faction with its own stake in the conflict and eroded confidence in the force. The modus operandi of the force prior to the intervening in Sierra Leone made it difficult to secure the agreement of all the parties in the conflict. The inability to secure the cooperation of all armed groupings affected the perception of ECOMOG's role by the junta and the force was automatically perceived as the junta's enemy (Adebajo 2002a, 88).

One other aspect that the force needs to review is the use of minimum force. Even though intervention operations involve the use of force, only the minimum force required to achieve the desired effect should be used. ECOMOG must be aware of the possibility of post-conflict war crime tribunals and its implications. In this era when combatants can be tried for war crimes committed many years after combat, it will be prudent of ECOMOG forces to use only the required amount of force to deal with the situation and troops be reminded that they will be ultimately held accountable for any excess.

ECOMOG was accused of using excessive force to achieve its objective during the capture of Freetown (Adebajo 2002a, 89). However, ECOMOG denied this and explained that the AFRC junta, comprised former officers and soldiers of SLA, who perceived the intervention force as a hostile occupation force. A solution would be to come out early with a basic ROE for all of its missions and educate troops on them prior to deployment.

ECOMOG should also desist from the unnecessary harassment of civilians during operations. Such molestations deny the force the requisite support of the civilian populace during such missions. A confidential UN human rights report accused ECOMOG soldiers of summarily executing suspected rebels in the Sierra Leone operation (Associated Press, 12 February 1999). Some 100 soldiers were subsequently

summoned for questioning in connection with the alleged excesses (Berman and Sam 2000, 125). While in theatre, ECOMOG must be wary of human rights abuses by its troops.

The ROE for ECOMOG operations must reflect a stringent observance of international law, and international humanitarian law in particular (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001, 60). There is, to date, no internal common disciplinary or judicial procedure for ECOMOG troops who violate international laws of human rights. It is largely left to contributing nations to prosecute their own soldiers who contravene international laws. ECOMOG must also establish codes of conduct to ensure justice and accountability in the exercise of these responsibilities since such acts discredit ECOMOG forces in the eyes of a local population. The standards set by such codes should be high, and those who do not live up to them should be punished.

Inclusion of Civil Police Components during Intervention Operations.

The experience from the previous ECOMOG's operations has shown that, invariably, the force lacks the expertise of civil police components to handle civil issues when the security situation is stabilized. Commonly, the civil police forces of the countries in conflict are disorganized, non-existent or have become parties to the conflict. ECOMOG is not trained to perform police duties and has been very ineffective in that role. A solution would be to plan from the beginning to include civil police components whose role will be to assist the local authorities to maintain law and order once the military has stabilized the situation. Even though it is a new concept, ECOMOG is

entreated to emulate the current UN stability operations where the inclusion of the civil police component is mandatory.

Summary

This chapter has analyzed the external and internal reasons why ECOWAS continues to use ECOMOG as a key element in conflict resolution. The external reasons include: lack of national will on the part of the only super power to intervene directly; the inception of new foreign training assistance programs by US, France and Britain; slow UN reaction time to conflicts in Africa; and the need for collective responsibility in having a standing force. Some of the internal reasons why ECOWAS continues to employ ECOMOG are the peculiar natures of the conflicts, the need for prompt reaction, perceived lack of cultural understanding on the part of foreign militaries and the need for political stability to facilitate economic development.

The chapter also examined the feasibility of ECOMOG becoming a standing force. It concluded that in view of financial constraints, the location of the force and the need to have a force based on a case-by-case basis, the concept is not currently feasible. Instead, it would be more prudent to have a standing force headquarters, based at the secretariat, to monitor conflict indicators and warnings and to facilitate forward planning. Some policy implications for the subregion having ECOMOG were also discussed. The final part of this chapter examined the measures that ECOWAS Secretariat and ECOMOG itself can adopt to become more effective and relevant in the subregion.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Since 1990, when ECOWAS employed ECOMOG in an intervention operation in Liberia, the subregional body has never looked back. ECOWAS has, on four subsequent occasions, employed the force as a key feature to the overall conflict resolution mechanism in conflict situations in the West African subregion. This practice by the subregional body suggests that ECOMOG has been very successful in supporting conflict resolution despite the numerous challenges that confronted the force during these missions.

ECOMOG's goal during intervention missions has always been to establish peace so that a long-term conflict resolution would be achieved. With this in mind, the fact that ECOMOG's intervention did not always help resolve conflicts in some theaters is not an issue since it eventually provided the needed platform for diplomacy and dialogue, reduced the human sufferings and stopped the further destruction of infrastructure and property. It is these and other reasons that accounts for ECOWAS' use of ECOMOG as a key element of conflict resolution in the subregion.

Reasons Why ECOWAS Employ ECOMOG

Reasons underlying why ECOWAS uses ECOMOG in military intervention operations are both external and internal. One of the external reasons is the perceived lack of interest on the part of the sole superpower, US to be directly involved in intervention operations in the subregion. This situation became more prominent after the

US's experience in Somalia during Operation Restore Hope where nineteen US soldiers lost their lives. It is to back this withdrawal policy that the US, France and Britain introduced new foreign assistance training packages for African countries to help develop the peacekeeping capacity of their militaries.

The US has so far developed ACRI, ACOTA, and Focus Relief, while France introduced RECAP with the intention of building the peacekeeping capabilities of the militaries of French speaking countries in Africa. Britain, on the other hand, focused on training officers of selected countries in peacekeeping skills. To date, a number of countries from the West African subregion have participated in these programs. Though a laudable idea, these programs need to be tailored to suit the West African environment by involving the countries in the planning stage and including equipment as part of the package. Another external reason why ECOWAS continues to use ECOMOG is to conform to the future aspirations of the AU having an ASF that will be used by the organization to assist during conflict situations. Additionally, the needs for collective responsibility and the UN's slow reaction time to conflict situations in the subregion are other reasons that have motivated the subregional body to continue using ECOMOG as a military intervention force.

There are also numerous internal reasons why ECOWAS continues using ECOMOG. These include the peculiar nature of the conflicts in the subregion and the need for prompt reaction to crisis situations. There is also the perception that foreign troops lack adequate understanding of the culture of the society. One additional reason for the continued use of ECOMOG is the desire to attain political stability to facilitate economic development and integration in the subregion.

Possibility of ECOMOG Becoming a Standing Force and Its Policy Implications

The concept of ECOMOG becoming a standing force is laudable due to the fact that it would enhance prompt and timely deployment, improve efficiency due to combined training, and reduce the problem of interoperability. It could also serve as a deterrent to would-be rebels and coup plotters in the subregion and motivate governments to manage well the affairs of their respective countries.

Despite the fact that the concept seems remarkable, issues, such as funding of the force and where to locate it, make it politically unfeasible at this time. Another problem associated with having a standing force is that conflicts in the subregion differ from country to country and need to be approached on a case-by-case basis. The idea of making ECOMOG a standing force, therefore, is not ideal and the current concept of raising the force, as and when the situation demands, should be maintained. To make up for the absence of a standing force, ECOMOG could opt for a skeleton standing headquarters which will be less costly in economic terms yet provide the necessary planning vital for an effective response.

Policy Implications for the Subregion

The willingness to have such an intervention force in the subregion is bound to demand certain policies by the subregional political leaders to make the force more effective and successful. The leaders must be seriously committed to funding the force to be able to achieve whatever mandate the force is given. Adequate funding will reduce significant logistics problems and enable sustainment of the force in any theater.

The leaders would also have to politically agree to denounce military coups and be committed to ensure a reverse of any such action, if it occurs. The strong stand taken by the leaders during the impasse that occurred after the death of President Eyadema of Togo, in February 2005, is a step in the right direction and must be maintained. Another area of concern would be for the subregional leaders to desist from the habit of harboring and supporting dissidents or rebels from neighboring countries. A study of some of the conflicts in the subregion will reveal allegations of countries' harboring rebels and dissidents against their neighbors. The leaders need to resolve to desist from condoning such acts which are detrimental to the conflict resolution effort. Countries in the subregion also need to step up their commitment and contribution to ECOMOG operations to compliment Nigeria's lead role in the subregion. They should not leave the burden of the financing and provision of troops entirely to Nigeria. Separate countries could offer some capabilities in the field of logistics or service to support the force. By so doing, the spirit of a coalition would be enhanced during operations.

Another policy worth mentioning is for the subregion to reduce the role of the military in civil politics in general. This is generally interpreted to mean that the military has the capacity to handle affairs of countries better than their civilian counterparts which easily leads to a never-ending chain of coups.

Ways of Making ECOMOG More Relevant and Effective.

For ECOMOG to become more effective and relevant in the subregion, both ECOWAS and the ECOMOG force have to complement each other. Since most of the conflicts can be traced to non-democratic governance, ECOWAS member states needs to adopt the AU's system of the self-policing mechanism outlined in NEPAD to encourage

and ensure democratic governance in all the subregion's countries. The subregional body should also encourage countries to deepen democratic governance by strengthening state institutions like parliament, the courts, central banks, police service, and even civil society. These could be achieved through the establishment of such neutral institutions as the Ombudsman, National Ethics Commission, and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice as it exists in Ghana (Adu Boahen 1996, 146-147). In countries where many atrocities have been committed in the past especially by the military, efforts must be made to reconcile the victims using reconciliation commissions such as was undertaken by South Africa, Nigeria, and Ghana.

The subregion should continue efforts to establish an early warning system, as advocated by the ECOWAS security protocol of 1999. These early warning centers would be able to give the required early warning of conflicts in the subregion to allow early settlement through other means. Such an early warning system would enable an early and usually less costly response to conflict situations. The subregional body must also complement ECOMOG's military effort with other instruments of power. The use of the economic, diplomatic and information instruments of power, in addition to the military would complement the military's role tremendously. ECOWAS must also ensure that its operations are legitimate by seeking and gaining the consent of warring factions, where possible, before intervening, as was the case during the recent Côte d' Ivoire operation.

ECOMOG's Own Initiatives

The ECOMOG force needs to overcome its logistics problems to be more effective. Apart from the fact that logistics need to be adequate, there is also the

requirement to plan logistics just as the force plans operations. The lack of coherent logistics planning has greatly affected operations in the past. The force must also endeavor to cultivate the practice of combined training prior to missions. This will enhance interoperability due to the different levels of peacekeeping skills, different doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures, and equipment.

The force should also have a separate political head, in the person of a Special Representative of the Executive Secretary, in theatre. This would reduce the burden of the military commander who has always doubled as the political head. ECOMOG must further review its modus operandi bearing in mind the principles of peacekeeping. Inculcation of these principles would make the force more credible in the eyes of the warring factions and society. As an innovation, the force must consider including civil police elements as part of the participating troops since police services are very critical to the forces activities during the stability phase of their operations. This would be in line with the UN's peacekeeping missions where civil police elements are vital to the success of almost any mission.

Recommendations

From the study, it would appear that ECOWAS will continue to employ ECOMOG as a key component of conflict resolution in the subregion. The following are therefore, recommended to make the force more effective and relevant in the subregion:

1. ECOWAS must employ other instruments of power to back the military effort in order to ensure the efficiency as well as the legitimacy and neutrality of the force.
2. ECOWAS member states must be more committed to funding the force's operations.

3. ECOWAS member states must denounce the practice of harboring rebels and dissidents of neighboring countries, denounce coups and reduce the role of the military in politics.

4. ECOWAS member states must adopt the AU's peer review mechanism and help strengthen state institutions.

5. ECOMOG must conduct combined training prior to its military intervention operations, to include logistics training/planning.

6. ECOMOG must establish a standing force headquarters to be located at the ECOWAS Secretariat.

7. ECOMOG missions must have a separate political head.

8. ECOMOG must include civil police as part of its troops for missions in the subregion.

Recommendation for Further Study

In the course of this research, one prominent issue that emerged was command and control problems of the force in theatre. Apart from the unavailability of a separate political head for ECOMOG's missions, units in theatre, at times, also resorted to clarifying orders from their home governments before compliance. This study therefore recommends further studies in these areas with a view to coming out with measures to avoid this potential pitfall.

Conclusion

In conclusion, ECOWAS will continue to employ ECOMOG as a conflict resolution mechanism in the West African subregion due to reasons previously cited. The

end-state of ECOMOG intervention operations has always been to calm conflict situations and provide the necessary secured environment for the political settlement of conflicts. This reality demands some policies and concrete action on the part of the member states if it is to become more effective and relevant.

The idea of the force becoming a standing force is laudable but is not feasible under the current circumstances. ECOWAS must therefore consider establishing a standing headquarters instead, which will be less costly in economic terms to maintain. Additionally, both the ECOWAS body and the ECOWAS force have the capacity to undertake steps, reforms and initiatives to make the force more effective. The recommendations from this study could be just the starting point for further discussions and action.

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